



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA**  
**TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MAY 18, 2023**  
**SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTION**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Ritter called the regular meeting of the Technical Review Committee (TRC) for the City of Okeechobee to order on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 10:05 A.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. ATTENDANCE**

The following TRC Members were present: City Administrator Gary Ritter, Building Official Jeffery Newell, Okeechobee County Fire Rescue (OCFR) Bureau Chief Justin Hazellief, Police Chief Donald Hagan, and Public Works Director David Allen. Okeechobee County Environmental Health (OCEH) Director Dianna May, Okeechobee Utility Authority (OUA) Executive Director John Hayford, Committee Secretary Patty Burnette, and General Services Secretary Keli Trimnal were also present. City Planning Consultant Ben Smith was available via Administrator Ritter's cell phone (Zoom was inoperable). City Attorney Gloria Velazquez, and the Okeechobee County School Board representative were absent.

**III. AGENDA**

- A.** There were no items added, deferred, or withdrawn from the agenda.
- B.** Motion by Building Official Newell, seconded by Public Works Director Allen, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- C.** There were no comment cards submitted for public participation.

**IV. MINUTES**

- A.** Motion by Building Official Newell, seconded by OCFR Bureau Chief Hazellief, to dispense with the reading and approve the February 16, 2023, Regular Meeting minutes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

- A.** Continued from the February 16, 2023, Meeting, Site Plan Review Application No. 23-001-TRC, to construct 28 rental units in two phases (six duplexes, two single-family homes and associated parking on each block) on 4.24± acres, located between Northeast (NE) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets and NE 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, Lots 1 to 12 of Blocks 110 and 121, CITY OF OKEECHOBEE.
  - 1.** City Planning Consultant Mr. Ben Smith of Morris-Depew Associates, Inc. briefly reviewed the Planning Staff Report, noting this report is in regard to revised plans that were submitted after the February Meeting. He is recommending the following conditions are satisfied prior to the issuance of any building permit: updated elevations and floor plans need to be submitted that are consistent with the site plan; primary front setbacks shall be at least 25 feet for all structures; site plan must provide lot coverage calculations and impervious surface calculations for each lot; demonstrating compliance with Section 90-450 of the City's Land Develop Regulations (LDRs); Applicant agrees that if utilities are not provided separately to each structure and lot, parcels may not be subdivided unless a master homeowners association is created to manage shared utilities; landscape plans shall demonstrate compliance with landscape buffer standards per Section 90-534(2) of the City's LDRs or the TRC may approve alternative landscape plans per Section 90-539 of the City's LDRs; and Engineering review comments shall be addressed as required by the City Administrator and Public Works Director.
  - 2.** Police Chief Hagan expressed concerns about the possibility of individual rooms being rented out, given there are four bedrooms in each dwelling unit, disturbances between tenants, and there being a possibility of parking issues. There would not be enough parking spaces for renting out individual rooms if everyone had a vehicle and then there could be issues with tenants parking in the rights-of-way. Public Works Director Allen is concerned with future subdividing of the drainage system as past practices have shown that homeowner associations have disbanded and then the Public Works Department becomes involved with maintenance. Administrator Ritter inquired as to whether there would be a manager on site and also commented about his concern with parking.



**V. NEW BUSINESS ITEM A CONTINUED**

3. Mr. Steven Dobbs, Applicant Mr. Frank Mitchell Stephens, [Registered Agent, Glenwood Park, LLC], and Mr. Russell Stephens, were present and available for questions. Mr. Dobbs clarified that the Planner's contingencies are being addressed at this time and will be met. Mr. Mitch Stephens advised that policies should be met regarding the application process, placement, and evictions. He further explained that he is not planning on low income housing although he is trying to keep costs down by proposing a blended model. Meaning a building could be rented to an entire family and a building could have individual rooms rented out.
4. No Public comments were offered.
5. Administrator Ritter disclosed he had spoken to Mr. Mitch Stephens, and Mr. Dobbs.
6. Motion by Public Works Director Allen, seconded by OCFR Bureau Chief Hazellief, to approve Site Plan Review Application No. 23-001-TRC, as presented in [Exhibit 1, which includes the Planning Consultants analysis of findings and recommendation for approval] with the following conditions being satisfied prior to the issuance of any building permit: updated elevations and floor plans need to be submitted that are consistent with the site plan; primary front setbacks shall be at least 25 feet for all structures; site plan must provide lot coverage calculations and impervious surface calculations for each lot; demonstrating compliance with Section 90-450 of the City's LDRs; Applicant agrees that if utilities are not provided separately to each structure and lot, parcels may not be subdivided unless a master homeowners association is created to manage shared utilities; landscape plans shall demonstrate compliance with landscape buffer standards per Section 90-534(2) of the City's LDRs or the TRC may approve alternative landscape plans per Section 90-539 of the City's LDRs; and Engineering review comments shall be addressed as required by the City Administrator and Public Works Director.  
**Motion Carried four to one, Police Chief Hagan voting No.**

- B.** Administrator Ritter discussed with Committee Members some recent changes made regarding the review of site plan submittals. The application submittals will now be emailed electronically for review. As part of the review process, comments and/or concerns are being requested back from the members before the actual meeting is scheduled in hopes that the applicant would be able to address them, and approvals would not be contingent on so many conditions. In addition, he mentioned to the members that he was having the City's Attorney review Chapter 70, Article II, Division 4 of the City's Code of Ordinances to see whether possible amendments could be proposed. This chapter established the TRC. Currently, the members of this Committee are subject to the Sunshine Act, thereby making it difficult for staff to speak with one another about the applications. If staff could speak to each other, the review process of site plans may be expedited quicker, thereby possibly saving the developers valuable money, time, and resources. No official action was required on this item.

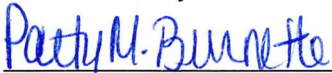
**VI. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE**

No updates provided at this time.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Ritter adjourned the meeting at 11:01 A.M.

Submitted by:



Patty M. Burnette, Secretary

Please take notice and be advised that when a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Technical Review Committee with respect to any matter considered at this proceeding, he/she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. General Services' media are for the sole purpose of backup for official records.